

**VERMONT PUBLIC SAFETY BROADBAND NETWORK (FIRSTNET) COMMISSION**

Vermont Department of Public Safety  
103 S. Main St  
Waterbury, VT05671

# ANNUAL REPORT

2014

## Vision of FirstNet

“To provide emergency responders with the first nationwide, high-speed, wireless broadband network dedicated to public safety.”

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# INTRODUCTION

## Introduction

This report is submitted to the Governor in keeping with the requirements of Executive Order #05-13.

### FIRSTNET

Congress enacted The Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012, (Act) containing landmark provisions to create a much-needed nationwide interoperable broadband network that will help police, firefighters, emergency medical service professionals and other public safety officials stay safe and do their jobs and created FirstNet, the authority within the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) to oversee development of this network. The Act requires FirstNet to consult with state and local stakeholders to ensure coordinated development, construction, management, maintenance, and operation of the network. The Act provides \$7 billion in funding towards deployment of this network, as well as \$135 million for a new State and Local Implementation Grant Program administered by NTIA to support efforts to plan and work with FirstNet to ensure the network meets wireless public safety communications needs.

### COMMISSION CREATION

The Vermont Public Safety Broadband Network Commission was created by Executive Order in May of 2013, to help plan, develop, and implement an interoperable wireless network to support the communication needs of first responders and others.

The purpose of the Commission is to ensure the building, deployment and operation of a statewide interoperable public safety broadband network that meets the interoperability goals and specifications of the FirstNet nationwide public safety broadband network, pursuant to Title VI of the Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012 (Act), Pub. L. No. 112-96, 126 Stat. 156 (2012).

The Commission shall advise the Governor on issues related to the public safety broadband network. In addition, the Commission shall report to the Governor annually on implementation of the public safety broadband network in Vermont and nationally, and shall include information regarding the use of grant money received by Vermont for

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the purpose of building a public safety broadband network. The report shall also include information regarding how the completed system will be sustained.

## COMMISSION MEMBERS

### Public Safety Broadband Network Commission

#### Member Roster

<b><u>Name</u></b>	<b><u>Agency</u></b>	<b><u>Term Expiration Date</u></b>
Francis X. Aumand III, Chair	Department of Public Safety	7/15/2016
Alton Barber	Vermont State Fire Chiefs	7/15/2016
Kiersten Bourgeois, Vice-Chair	Agency of Commerce & Community Development/Connect VT	7/15/2016
Christopher Campbell	Vermont Telecommunication Authority	7/15/2016
Frank Costantino	Department of Information & Innovation	7/15/2016
Joseph Flynn	Vermont Emergency Management/DEMHS	7/15/2016
William Laferriere	Buildings & General Services	7/15/2016
Terry LaValley	Department of Public Safety	7/15/2016
Steven Locke	Local Representative, Hartford, VT	7/15/2016
Michael Manning	Vermont State Police/DEMHS	7/15/2016
James Porter	Department of Public Service	7/15/2016
Michael Richards	Local Representative, Colchester, VT	7/15/2016
David Tucker	Enhanced 9-1-1 Board	7/15/2016
Robert White	Vermont Agency of Transportation	7/15/2016

## LOOKING AHEAD

The Commission is looking for a busy 2015. We expect to move aggressively with the development of a State Plan for the development of Vermont's public safety broadband

# INTRODUCTION

network. This will be accomplished through working closely with the national FirstNet staff in holding our initial state consultation process.

The purpose of this initial consultation is to understand the unique needs of our state, share information about FirstNet and the overall consultation process, and to begin a dialogue on how to collaborate with Vermont's public safety entities as FirstNet works toward the development of a state plan.

The Commission expects that a project manager will be hired within the first two months of 2015. Also a contract for a technical advisor will be initiated which will provide Vermont with the expertise of person with radio frequency (RF) experience. The project manager is needed to carry out the work of the Commission and to advance the implementation of broadband network in Vermont.

# MEETINGS

## Meetings

The following meetings were held by the Commission. These meetings were advertised and publically warned and minutes kept of the discussions.

March 5, 2014

April 2, 2014

June 2, 2014

September 3, 2014

October 1, 2014

December 3, 2014

Generally meetings are schedule for the first Wednesday of every month. Some meetings have been cancelled during the year due to the lack of business to be conducted.

# ACTIVITIES IN 2014

## Activities in 2014

### OUTREACH

Four Commission members attended a national FirstNet Conference held in Atlantic, GA in March of 2014.

Four (4) outreach presentations were conducted during 2014 providing information on FirstNet and the development of the national broadband network. Approximately 140 individuals from a variety of public safety organizations were in attendance at these meetings. Handouts about FirstNet were distributed.

The Chair and Vice Chair of the Commission met with former Vermont Governor James Douglas and briefed him on the status of the Commission and Vermont's commitment to participate in a national public safety broadband network. Governor Douglas was appointed in September to be a member of the national FirstNet Board.

### RESPONSE TO SOLICITATION

FirstNet asked State Commissions to comment on two public notices they distributed. Vermont responded to the request for comment on FirstNet Proposed Interpretations of Parts of the Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012. Vermont also commented on the Request for Information for Comprehensive Network Solutions.

These comments are available upon request.

### INITIAL CONSULTATION MATERIAL

The Commission has just recently submitted the readiness checklist for the State's initial consultation meeting. Vermont will participate in the consultation meeting(s) sometime in the early third quarter of 2015.

### HIRING OF PERSONNEL

The hiring of a full time employee to serve as a project manager for this initiative has been big challenge. The delay has been caused in part by the hiring freeze that was initiated for a brief period in August and also our inability to find qualified candidates. The Commission is looking for a unique person who has project management skills but also has knowledge of the public safety business and technology needs of these

## ACTIVITIES IN 2014

organizations. Two round of hiring have been conducted and third is underway. The Department of Public Safety is currently advertising for this position. If a person is not hired to full this state position we will seek a vendor to provide project management services.

# SLIGP GRANT INFORMATION

## SLIGP Grant Information

A federal grant has been received by the Department of Public Safety titled the State Local Implementation Grant Program (SLIGP). It is intended to fund outreach and education services for state and local agencies and assist in the development of state plan to implement a public safety wireless broadband network.

### GRANT MONEY SPENT

At this time few funds have been expended. The following is the budget breakdown showing expenses for this grant program.

<b>Budget Summary</b>							
<u>Budget Category</u>					<u>Amount</u>	<u>Expended</u>	<u>Balance</u>
A. Personnel					\$368,739	\$4,187	\$364,552
B. Fringe Benefits					\$120,153	\$1,357	\$118,796
C. Travel					\$14,700	\$5,102	\$9,598
D. Equipment					\$0		\$0
E. Supplies					\$7,509	\$178	\$7,331
F. Construction					\$0		\$0
G. Consultants/Contracts					\$199,840		\$199,840
H. Other					\$0		\$0
Total Direct Costs					\$710,941	\$10,824	\$700,117
I. Indirect Costs					\$177,735		
				<b>TOTAL PROJECT COSTS</b>	<b>\$888,676</b>	<b>\$10,824</b>	<b>\$700,117</b>
				Federal Share	\$710,941		
				Non-Federal Share	\$177,735		

# VERMONT PUBLIC SAFETY REQUIREMENTS

## Vermont Public Safety Requirements

The following is a high level documentation of the public safety business needs and concerns for the development of a Vermont public safety broadband network. This document was created at the end of 2013 as a first step in identifying what Vermont may need in broadband solution for public safety entities.

### **What are Vermont's requirements?**

- A system that is hardened, redundant and secure.
- The system must have multiple cores and be protected against outside intrusions and databases in Vermont must be protected against system intrusions from the FirstNet network.
- We need to coordinate with Canada to allow the states on the northern border to operate in a frequency range that does not cause interference.
- Any network components that are built in Vermont need to be in transportation corridors that are open and accessible so maintenance and repair can be conducted.
- Two tone paging capabilities need to be part of the network and system.
- Coverage for all
- Interface with E 911
- A device that is agnostic and will work in an all hazards environment is an important feature that needs to be considered.
- Make the costs affordable for the volunteers to use.

### **What are the issues the Vermont team is concerned about?**

- "A " line radio frequency problems with Canada
- Sharing resources and using federal lands for infrastructure siting
- Governance, what are the expectations for state and local governance long term? What is the role of the planning group?
- If something goes wrong with the network who gets called?
- Permitting and land use is key in Vermont how will the network build impact our permitting requirements.
- What will the priority service requirements and will there be preemption of service?

### **What are Vermont's priority concerns as of today?**

- Governance and what will be expected of the state and local governance organization in the future?
- How will we deal with the interference issues with Canada?

**What does it mean to be public safety grade? This is a big question that is being presented to all those commercial providers interested in building the network and is a major requirement. A public safety grade network means in large part;**

- It is where public safety needs it, by geographic areas.
- It is reliable enough so that your life can depend on it.
- It has resiliency, multiple back-up options.
- It is an emergency communications tool which will be your trusted resource device for communication.
- It is capable of being a group communications tool which is essential for teamwork.

# VERMONT PUBLIC SAFETY REQUIREMENTS

## **What are the challenges for Vermont?**

- Understanding the expectations for the governance of this new network both in the short and long term, and managing expectations are key challenges for Vermont.
- Costs and sustainability.
- Developing a Communications plan
- outreach
- union issues
- Line A issues need to be resolved so we do not have the same issues that we have LMR systems.
- Identifying user groups
- Keeping the network core robust and technologically current
- Who is responsible for the long term management of the network?
- The business model needs to be identified and communicated and the use of the network for commercial entities such as utilities needs to be identified. They have said this is not being built for commercial providers but commercial providers may benefit as a result of collocating infrastructure structures and equipment.

## **Who are the primary and secondary users of the network that have or will have access to devices on the network?**

- Law enforcement
- Fire
- EMS
- Hospitals
- Public works
- Utilities, telecom providers
- Transportation - Public
- Conservation officers
- Volunteers of emergency management or EOC
- Fed users
- Medical Examiners
- Building examiners/Inspections
- Criminal justice practitioners such as; corrections, probation and parole.
- Special teams
- Animal control
- Government administration
- Private Security

# CONTACT INFORMATION

## Contact Information

### Vermont Public Safety Broadband Network (FirstNet) Commission

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